

Taking the Pill

Be sure you read these directions before you start taking your pills or anytime you are not sure of what to do.

SUNDAY START

Take the first pill on the Sunday after your period starts, even if you are still bleeding. If your period begins on a Sunday, start your pills that day. Use a back-up method for one week.

FIRST DAY START

Begin taking the pills on the FIRST day of your period. Take one pill about the same time every day, either with food or at bedtime. When you have finished the pack begin a new pack the next day. Use a back-up method for one week.

SAME DAY PILL STARTS

Your clinician may have you start your pills on the same day that you come in for a clinic visit. Use a back-up method for one week.

WARNING SIGNS OF SERIOUS PILL PROBLEMS

IF YOU EXPERIENCE:

A - ABDOMINAL PAIN

C - CHEST PAIN

H - HEADACHE (you had never before)

E - EYE OR VISION PROBLEMS

S - SWELLING OR SEVERE PAIN IN ONE LEG

STOP your pills and call our office immediately; if not available go to the emergency room, or contact your physician. Remember if you have questions about your pills, please call our office.

Points to Remember

- Birth control pills are very safe and effective.
- Always make sure you have enough pills so that you do not run out.
- Certain medications interact with the pill. Anytime you need to see a healthcare provider, tell them you are taking birth control pills.
- Birth control pills do not protect you from sexually transmitted infections, including AIDS.
- If you are experiencing problems taking the pill that are not mentioned in this pamphlet, do not stop taking the pill, contact a nurse.



*Prevention Message for Sexually Transmitted Diseases, Including HIV:
Latex condoms, when used consistently & correctly, are highly effective in preventing transmission of HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. In addition, correct and consistent use of latex condoms can reduce the risk of other sexually transmitted diseases.

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Panhandle Health District
Healthy People in Healthy Communities

The Birth Control Pill



PANHANDLE HEALTH DISTRICT OFFICES

Boundary County	267- 5558
Kootenai County	415-5100
Shoshone County	786- 7474
Bonner County	263- 5159
Benewah County	245- 4556

Missed Pills

Pill Problems

If you miss a pill it is important to use a back-up method of birth control (condom) or abstain from sex for the next seven days until you have been back on your active birth control pills for a full seven days.

If you miss one or more pills and have had intercourse in the past 5 days and have not used a back-up method you may need to consider use of emergency contraception.

Always keep a supply of condoms to use as a back-up method. Abstinence (no sex) is also an effective back-up method.

Common Pill Questions

Will I get pregnant if I miss one pill?

Probably not, but to be absolutely safe, **use a back-up method for the next 7 days.**

Do I need to give my body a break occasionally from the pill? NO.

The pill can be taken safely for many years.

Always keep a supply of condoms to use as a back-up method. Abstinence is also an effective back-up method.

Breakthrough Bleeding

This is any spotting or bleeding which occurs at any time in the first 3 weeks of your pill packet. This may occur during the first three months of the pill as your body adjusts. It does NOT mean that your pill is not working, but it will be less effective. *Do not stop taking the pill*, and use a back-up method during this time.

Nausea/Vomiting/Upset Stomach/Diarrhea

Take your pill with food. If taking your pill at bedtime results in nausea during the day, try taking the pill with breakfast & do not skip lunch.

If you vomit within two hours of taking the pill, take another pill from a separate pill pack as soon as you feel better.

If you have severe diarrhea or vomiting for more than 24 hours, keep taking your pills on schedule, if you can. During the time you are ill and for seven days after you feel better, use a back-up contraceptive or abstain from sexual intercourse.

If your illness caused you to miss any pills from the 3rd week (pills 15-21), do not take your usual week off of hormonal pills. Do not take the reminder pills in the 28 day pack. Start a new pack immediately.

Use a back-up method until you are on your active pills for a full 7 days.

Missed Periods

It is not unusual to miss a period while on birth control pills and not be pregnant. Call us if you have missed a period and also have missed pills, or missed a period after your first pill pack.

Mood Swings

Taking vitamin B complex as well as calcium 1200 mg daily with your birth control pill may help. Exercise can also be helpful.

Call us if you find any side effects to your pill that are intolerable. There may be a different pill

BENEFITS OF BIRTH CONTROL

You could have:

- More regular, lighter, shorter, less painful periods.
- Less risk of ovarian & uterine cancer.
- Less risk of tubal pregnancy.
- Less likely to become anemic (low iron).
- Less likely to develop ovarian cysts.
- Can decrease symptoms of endometriosis.
- Less acne.
- 99% effective in pregnancy prevention when used as directed.